

**Congressman Denny Rehberg**

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34  
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From:

- ☐ Congressman Denny Rehberg
- ☐ Tom Schultz
- ☐ Jessica Flint
- ☒ Larry Anderson

## COMMENTS:

Please distribute a copy of the Congressman's letter to the Full Committee. This letter is in support of the Revolving Loan Fund to support the Wood Products Industry contained in HB 645

If you have difficulty receiving this fax, please call (406) 543-9550

**Denny Rehberg**  
State of Montana

**Appropriations Committee**  
Labor, Health and Human  
Services, and Education  
Energy and Water Development  
Foreign Operations

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515

March 9, 2009

Governor Brian D. Schweitzer  
Office of the Governor  
Montana State Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 200801  
Helena MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

I was encouraged to read recently of your plans to utilize a portion of Montana's economic stimulus funds to create a State Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) to aid our state's wood products industry.

As you well know, the wood products industry has been stressed to the breaking point over the years due to lack of accessible timber and other pressures. With the downturn in our economy, the drop in housing starts and a decline in demand for wood products has brought that stress to critical mass. The wood products industry has been responsive to the changing demand for timber and wood products by reducing costs and increasing efficiencies, but without help those efforts may not be enough. A report prepared by the Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research projects that the housing slump will continue through 2009 and into 2010. The associated drop in demand for wood products has resulted in large inventories of unsold products at mills and lumber yards throughout the state. Steps must be taken now to ensure that our critical wood products industry infrastructure is maintained until this situation turns around.

I have always been a strong supporter of the wood products industry in Montana. The infrastructure we save now will form the foundation for a vibrant wood products industry that will provide clean-burning biomass energy, a reliable supply of material for construction, and thousands of well-paying jobs. In addition to playing a large role in the economic future of our state, the wood products industry promotes the health of our forests through responsible timber management.

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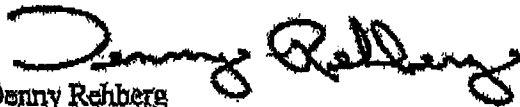
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As you work toward implementation of the RLP, my office will be available to provide support for Economic Development Administration grant funding and USDA Rural Development assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denny Rehberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Denny Rehberg  
Montana's Congressman